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To <apena-wallace@fec.gov> 2012 APR 12 PM 1:21

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OFFICE OF GENERAL

Subject Fw: Response - Lynch For Congress COUNSEL

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MUR # 6498

From:
Sent: Friday, February 03, 2012 3:38 PM
To: mpena-wallace@fec.gov
Subject: Response - Lynch For Congress

Ms Pena-Wallace,

I apologize for not getting back to you sooner. With the holidays, trying to determine the particulars of relatively few transactions that occurred quite some time ago and personally moving recently we have been working as diligently as possible to get you the information that you requested.

First, with regard to campaign personnel who would be familiar with transactions, there were only two: Jessica Dornblaser and Tim Dornblaser. Jessica's contact number is _____ and Tim's contact number is _____

With regard to the individual items, I must reiterate that there never was any intent to use any campaign funds for anything other than items pertaining to the campaign. In fact, to the contrary, I personally spent countless hours working with our representative from the FEC, Mr. Jeff Pope trying to work with the new computer system. From the beginning, there were issues with regard to the drop down menus not being specific enough and having to "fit" particular items into the categories that were available. Matters became even worse when we had a "special election" and there were no drop downs or dates available for special election provisions and we had to spend significant amounts of time working with technical support to get rid of the errors in order to file the reports. There were several times that technical support was not sure with how to deal with a special election and there were delays in filing the reports.

With regard to Ms. Botta's claims, contrary to advice from our campaign staff, I met with Ms. Botta who wanted to volunteer for the campaign in hopes of attaining a job in Washington, DC if we were successful in our campaign. From the beginning, Ms. Botta rubbed the other volunteers the wrong way but she filled an important role with working with the FEC to file the reports. She was given this task due to the fact that she had previous experience with these responsibilities. I personally saw her working for many long hours entering items on the reports, filing the reports and spending countless hours on the phone with technical support to get rid of errors in the system. She was given this task also because it became obvious that, with my ever growing schedule of appearances, speeches and interviews that it was too much for me to handle.

With the escalating tensions that Ms. Botta created, she became less of an upper level confidant and

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more of a worker bee. Whether this weighed on her or if there was some other nefarious motives involved, I do not know. What I do know is that all of the staff worked extremely long hours, especially through the craziness of a special election due to the sudden, unexpected resignation of the incumbent congressman. I know that Ms. Botta was travelling between her home in South Carolina to Florida and that her granddaughter that she cared for had serious health issues and her ability to put in the time necessary to take care of the financial aspect of the campaign became more and more limited. Our staff had discussions about limiting her duties. Either due to her stress or, again, for other nefarious reasons her relationship with other staff became more and more contentious. Finally, one day when she was supposed to be in the office, she would not answer her phone and we never talked with her again. It was then that we discovered that she had illegally taken confidential, federal campaign financial records and distributed them to some of our supporters and to our opponents with these false claims. The ironic part is that the largest financial contributions came from me personally.

After she abruptly left the campaign and took many of the financial records and statements, it was Tim Dornblaser that stepped up and took the reins of the financial reporting. Tim worked tirelessly to figure out what Ms. Botta had done, or not done, and worked diligently on entering the backlog of items into the system and filing the reports. Tim took over when we were in the midst of the special election and, as I previously mentioned, he had to spend countless hours working with technical support since there were not provisions for our special election in the system.

The frantic nature of a special election due to a seated congressman unexpectedly and suddenly resigning, made it an overwhelming task to keep track of everything that was going on all the time and we had to have meetings in between meetings to try to put everything together. Considering the raw number of transactions that were entered under trying circumstances we endeavored to make sure that everything was properly accounted for.

From the very beginning, it was apparent that we would not be able to raise significant funds and that I would have to take my savings to fund the majority of the campaign. The first deposit of \$29,800 was a cash deposit that I took from my savings and opened our first account. After that money quickly was used in large part in the filing fee of over \$10,000, it became apparent that we would need a financial cushion so I took an additional \$50,000 and made it available to the campaign if needed and we could not raise additional funds. This was a significant amount of money from lifelong scrimping and saving and I made it clear that I could not afford to not have the campaign pay it back if we started to raise money but I would make it available. We all agreed that, instead of repaying the loan to me personally in one lump sum, we would repay the loan in small increments in order to keep the campaign account with money in it to pay for the huge number of items required to run a congressional campaign. This was made apparent to us when our opponent spent over \$2 million to beat us in the 2008 general election.

Because of the frantic nature of our first campaign there were times when a receipt was not turned in on time or there was a mix up with regard to a payment being made. We worked, sometimes, 20 hours per day and drove, at times, hundreds of miles per day to make the many meetings that we needed to attend as our congressional district was in 2 of the largest counties in Florida. In fact, at one point during the campaign, I was gone for nearly a week in Haiti, setting up 3 medical clinics and I was only able to communicate one day via Facebook. Our campaign staff agreed that if there was ever any small amount that was not able to be accounted for that it would be considered a repayment of my loans and I would take on the burden of those costs. Ms. Botta was the person that actually came up with this solution. With regard to items that Ms. Botta, incorrectly, claimed that was personal gain, she is completely inaccurate. For example, the claim of the campaign paying for my wife's phone bill is patently false. As a staff we discussed that we needed additional phones and that cellular phones would be the best and least expensive solution. We were going to use a month to month service (Metro One), however, the service was so poor that we decided not to go that route. When we looked into various plans, we

discovered that we would have to sign a 2 year commitment and that the costs would be higher than Metro One, that we would have to lay out hundreds of dollars for the equipment and when the campaign was over, we would have to pay a cancellation fee. Therefore, we decided that the most cost effective solution was to use my existing, unlimited plan with my cellular phone as well as the one that my wife had.

As I stated in a previous correspondence, we just want to close out the committee and put this all to rest. If there are any issues that need correcting, we are more than willing to amend any report filed to include the information as the FEC would have us put them in the appropriate categories. In fact my opponent who was in congress for 13 years had to go back and amend over 25 of his filings over many years. I am not sure as to the reasons Ms. Botta would have to make claims that are untrue or why she would choose to illegally take confidential, federal campaign financial records and distribute them to our supporters and opponents but I must state unequivocally that there was never, ever any intent to use campaign funds for anything personal. It just does not make sense that these baseless charges would have any merit since I could have just as easily, legitimately and appropriately written myself a check to repay the entire amount of loans that I made to the campaign as we started to raise money. I did not do that because we wanted to make sure that there would be enough money to run the campaign the best we could. I even sold my vehicle to put additional monies into the campaign to make sure that we could pay for items such as signs, brochures, buttons, pens, television commercials, shirts, hats, etc. We all endeavored to do our best to file appropriately and on time and spent countless hours working with the folks at the FEC to figure out how to accurately file, especially for the special election. And, again, it is our desire to resolve all of the issues and close out the committee once and for all.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Lynch, Sr.

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